

HUMAN FAST-1 GENE

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

hFAST-1 is a human forkhead activin signal transducer gene. The *hFAST-1* protein has the ability to bind to human Smad2 and activate an activin response element (ARE). The *hFAST-1*-dependent activation of ARE is dependent on endogenous Smad4 and stimulation of the TGF- β receptor. The *hFAST-1* protein binds to a novel DNA motif, TGT(G/T)(T/G)ATT, which is present within the ARE. This motif is important for the activation of genes responsive to ligands of the TGF- β family. The invention includes tools for investigating the TGF- β signaling pathway and screening for compounds which modulate the action of TGF- β .